MISSOURI BOARD OF PHARMACY

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

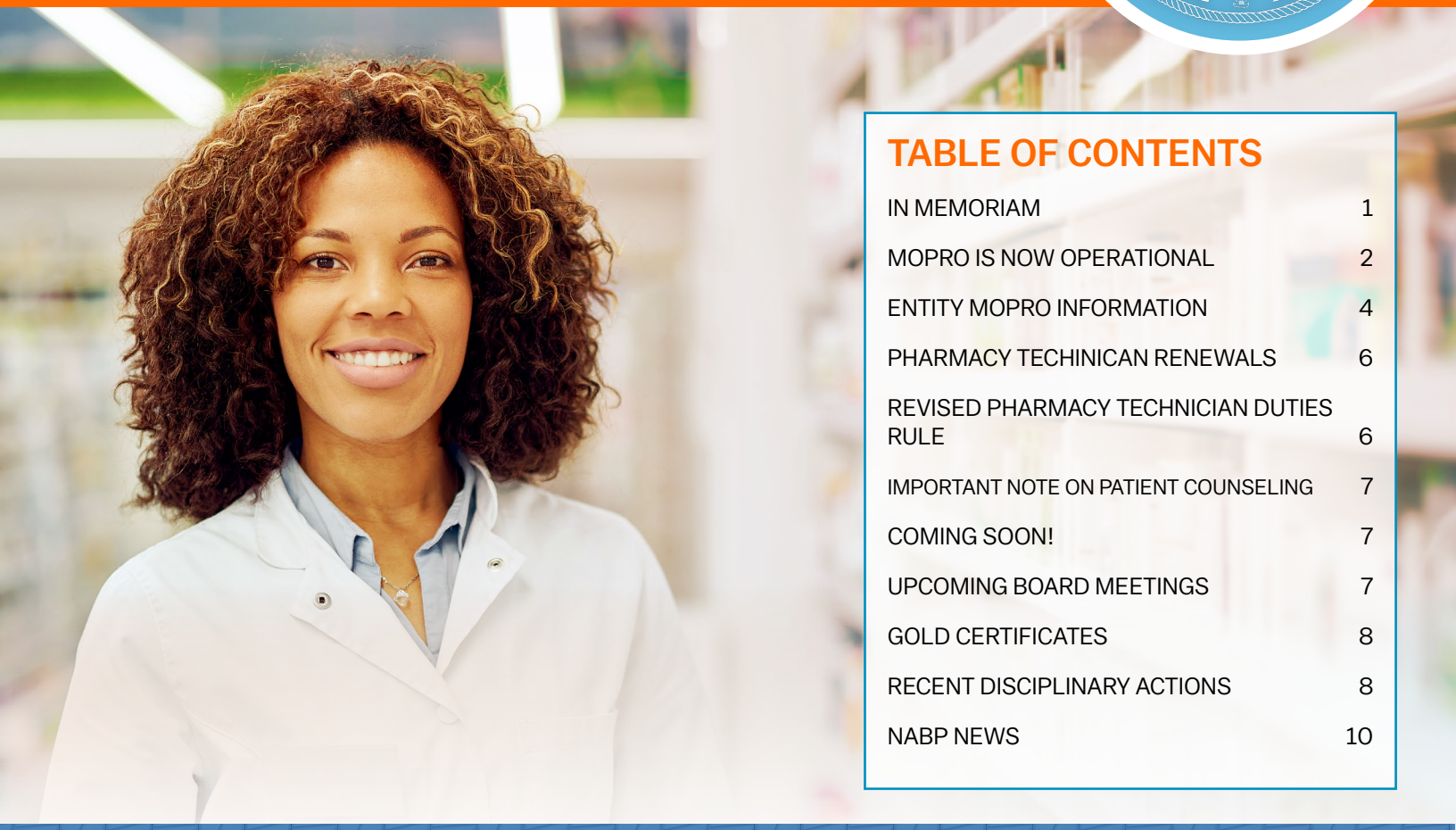


TABLE OF CONTENTS

IN MEMORIAM	1
MOPRO IS NOW OPERATIONAL	2
ENTITY MOPRO INFORMATION	4
PHARMACY TECHINICAN RENEWALS	6
REVISED PHARMACY TECHNICIAN DUTIES RULE	6
IMPORTANT NOTE ON PATIENT COUNSELING	7
COMING SOON!	7
UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS	7
GOLD CERTIFICATES	8
RECENT DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS	8
NABP NEWS	10

IN MEMORIAM

Kevin Kinkade
February 27, 1953 - February 7, 2025

The Board would like to extend its sincerest condolences to the family of Kevin Kinkade, former Executive Director of the Missouri Board of Pharmacy. Kevin, 71, passed away on Friday, February 7, 2025, at Cape Canaveral Hospital in Cocoa Beach, FL.

Kevin was born on February 27, 1953, in Vandalia, Missouri, and graduated from Vandalia High School. Kevin was a proud graduate of St. Louis College of Pharmacy and began his pharmacy career in 1977 as a staff pharmacist at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Hannibal, Missouri. Kevin later moved to Columbia, Missouri, where he worked as staff pharmacist at the Veteran's Administration Hospital, prior to becoming Director of Pharmacy at Ellis Fischel State Cancer Hospital in Columbia in 1979. During this time, Kevin became active in the Missouri Society of Hospital Pharmacists, serving as chair of the legislative committee, on the board of directors, and later as president.

Kevin was hired as Executive Director of the Missouri Board of Pharmacy in 1984, where he faithfully served the State and citizens of Missouri for over twenty-two (22) years. As Executive Director, Kevin led the Board through a wide variety of changes in pharmacy practice and helped to create a large part of the current Missouri Practice Act. Kevin was an unwavering advocate for patient safety and the pharmacy profession.

Kevin distinguished himself nationwide as an expert in state regulatory and political affairs and later served as a member of the executive board of the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), serving in all executive offices, including NABP president and chairman of the executive committee. Mr. Kinkade also participated on a variety of NABP committees and working groups for more than eighteen years.

Kevin also served as a member or chair of multiple pharmacy and government health care groups and task forces throughout his career, including the Midwest Pharmacy Conference; the Missouri Joint Committee on Health Care Policy and Planning; the Missouri Task Force on Misuse, Abuse and Diversion of Prescription Drugs; the National Institute for Standards in Pharmacy Credentialing; and the Governor's Commission on Patient Safety.

Kevin's expertise and commitment to pharmacy practice has been recognized with multiple honors and awards over the years, including: the Mid-Missouri Society of Hospital Pharmacists Pharmacist of the Year, MSHP Pharmacist of the Year, MSHP Garrison Achievement Award, Missouri Pharmacy Association President's Award, National Association of Boards of Pharmacy Resolution for Lifetime Service, St. Louis College of Pharmacy Alumni Association Outstanding Achievement Award, and Proclamation by the Governor of Missouri for Service to the State.

After retiring from the Board, Kevin founded K2 Pharmacy Consulting Services, where he consulted with hospitals and pharmacies on compliance and pharmacy management. Kevin also served as director of pharmacy services for Cooper County Memorial Hospital in Boonville, Missouri, and Lafayette Regional Medical Center in Lexington, Missouri.

Kevin loved his family, friends, and dear wife Doris Elaine Fischer who he married on August 8, 2003. In addition to his family and friends, Kevin absolutely loved MU football and the KC Chiefs!!! Kevin became a Tigers football season ticketholder as soon as he moved to Columbia and was legendary for his Mizzou tailgates! There was even a special "away" game every year to bond with his best friends under the MU banner.

The Board extends its sincere appreciation for Kevin's commitment to patient safety, pharmacy practice and the citizens of Missouri! Kevin's service and friendship will never be forgotten.

MOPRO IS NOW OPERATIONAL!

The MOPRO online licensing portal is now available! MOPRO gives you 24/7 access to all license functions, including, but not limited to:

- Applying for or updating a license
- Renewing your license
- Changing your name, address, e-mail, or other contact information
- Submitting a Notification of Intent to Immunize or to Administer Medication by Prescription Order
- Applying for a certificate of medication therapy services (MTS)
- Submitting online payments
- Requesting a duplicate license or license verification
- Changing corporate officers or owners of a licensed business
- Changing pharmacy classifications
- Class M pharmacy notifications, and
- Out-of-business notifications

****The Board is currently experiencing a high volume of pending applications, e-mails and applications as we transition to the MOPRO system. Additional U.S. mail delays have caused extended wait times. As a result, application processing times are longer than normal, including, pharmacy technician processing times. Please check the MOPRO portal for application updates****

Individual Account Registration

Licensees/applicants must first register with MOPRO to create a portal account. To register, you will need to have an e-mail on record with the Board. A one-time password (OTP) will be sent to the registered e-mail address with instructions for finalizing your MOPRO account.

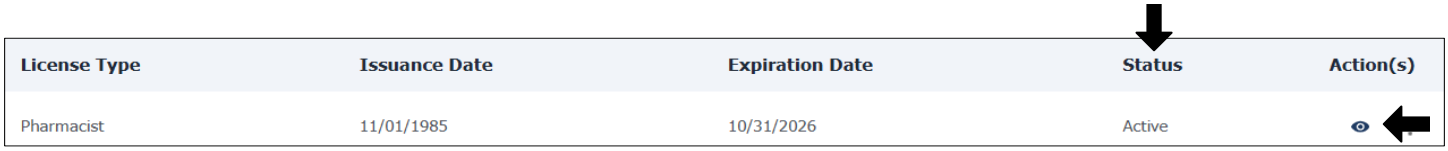
• Watch the MOPRO registration video on the Board's website to see a step-by-step guide on how to register in MOPRO: https://www.pr.mo.gov/pharmacists.asp

• Need to update an e-mail address to claim your account? E-mail your name, date of birth, license number, and new e-mail address to at moprotech@pr.mo.gov. Again, you will need access to the e-mail account given to register in MOPRO.

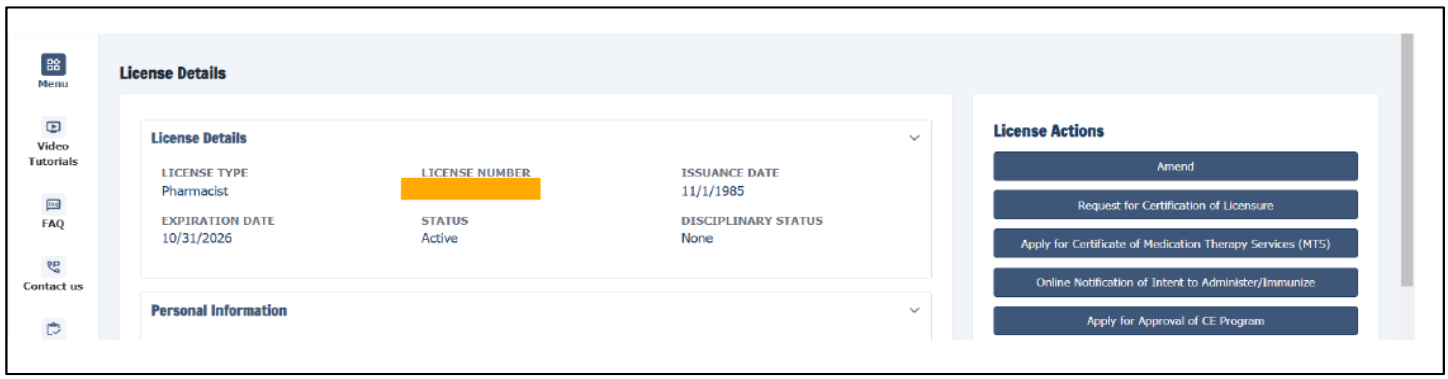
• Need technical help with registering with MOPRO or creating your online portal account? Contact our MOPRO tech center at moprotech@pr.mo.gov (include your license number and description of the issue) or call the MOPRO technical response center at 833-373-2936.

License Amendments:

After creating your account, individuals can view, edit, and amend your license by clicking "My License" on the MOPRO left menu toolbar and selecting the "eye" icon.



The "License Details" page will open after clicking the "eye" icon.



The following services/options are available on the "License Details" page:

- Change Address (Click "Amend" in toolbar)
- Change Name (Click "Amend in toolbar): Legal proof verifying the name change must be submitted/downloaded in MOPRO (e.g., marriage license, divorce decree, court order, driver's license).
- Change Employment/Address/Phone # (Click "Amend" in toolbar)
- Download license copies: Licensees can now download a free copy of their license from MOPRO at no cost. Downloaded licenses can be used as proof of official licensure under the Board's rules.
- Request for Certification of Licensure $$: Select to request an official certification letter mailed or e-mailed directly by the Board. Please note a free online primary source verification can be printed from the Board's website by doing an online licensee search at: https://mopro.mo.gov/license/s/license-search
- Apply for an MTS certificate $$
- Submit Online Notification of Intent to immunize or administer medication by prescription order.
- Apply for Continuing Education Approval: For pharmacist continuing education only.

• Request for Duplicate License : Select only if you would like the Board office to print a duplicate copy of your license/ registration and mail it to you. A $20 fee will apply for duplicate licenses printed and mailed by the Board office. Please note licensees can now print a free copy of their license from the MOPRO portal on your own by clicking the "Download License Copies" option (see above). Both Board and self-printed licenses from MOPRO can be used as proof of official licensure under the Board's rules.
• Request Duplicate Wall Hanging License $$: Select to request a duplicate of your frameable 11" x 17" pharmacist commemorative wall hanging license (Note this is different from the smaller printed licenses mailed to all licensees). A $ 20 fee will apply. Choose the "Download License Copies" or the "Request Duplicate License" option to print a standard copy of your license and the accompanying wallet card.
• Discipline/State or Federal Action Reporting: See rule 20 CSR 2220-2.010 for reporting requirements. Reports can also be submitted online at: https://mopro.mo.gov/license/s/pharmacy-reporting-form

$$ - Fees apply

ENTITY MOPRO INFORMATION

Registering in MOPRO:

Business entities will need to register in MOPRO to claim your business license. Click "Register" on the MOPRO page and select "Business License." You will be prompted to either claim an existing business license, sign up for a license for the first time, or to apply for an additional license:

• Select "Yes, I want to see/edit/renew my existing Missouri license" if you would like to claim a Missouri license that you currently hold or if you're a current licensee and would like to apply for a new business license under the same account (see additional instructions below). You will be able to add/ merge any other licenses you have with the Board under this option.

• Select "No, I want to sign up for a license for the first time" if you do not have a current entity license and would like to file an initial business license with the Board.

• Select "I want to apply for an additional license" if you have a current business license but would like to establish a new MOPRO account and apply for a license that is completely separate from your other business license(s). You will not be able to see or manage any other Missouri licenses in this account if you select this option.

• You will be able to apply for, renew, and modify your license after your MOPRO account is registered and setup.

• Need technical help with registering with MOPRO or creating your online portal account? Contact our MOPRO tech center at moprotech@pr.mo.gov (include your name/ license number and description of the issue) or call the MOPRO technical response center at 833-373-2936.

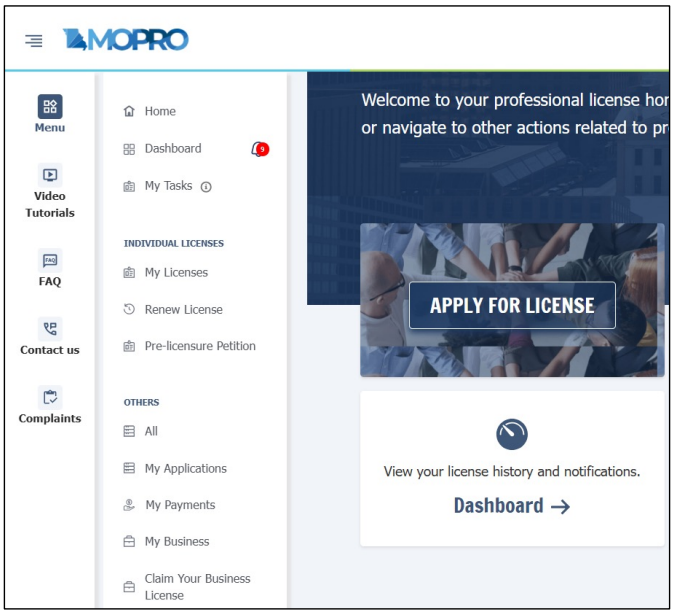
Claiming an Existing License:

If you are registering with MOPRO for the first time, click "Register" on the MOPRO page and select "Business License." Select "Yes, I want to see/edit/renew my existing Missouri license" to claim an existing license (see "Connecting Multiple Licenses" if you already have a MOPRO account).
• MOPRO will prompt you to enter the license #, or business name/address, or FEIN for the license you would like to claim (only use a FEIN if previously filed with the Board). The information must match exactly what is printed on your license to setup a MOPRO account. *Note: The Missouri Secretary of State registration # option is not currently available for Board licensees.*
• MOPRO will automatically retrieve your license after the business information is entered. After retrieving your license, a one-time password (OTP) will be sent to the business e-mail address registered with the Board, along with a link to complete your MOPRO account and create a password.
• You will need access to the e-mail address registered with the Board to receive your OTP and complete your MOPRO registration. To update an entity e-mail address, please e-mail an address change request to pharmacy@pr.mo.gov. E-mail change requests must be on official letterhead and include the entity's current licensed name, license number, address, and new e-mail address.
• **What if I have multiple licenses?** Choose one of the licenses to claim and setup a MOPRO account. Once your account is created, you will have the option to add/connect other Board licenses to the account (see below).
• **Do I need to setup a separate account for each of my licenses?** No! You only need to claim 1 of your licenses to setup a MOPRO account. MOPRO will allow you to add/ connect other licenses after your initial MOPRO account is created.

Connecting Multiple Licenses:

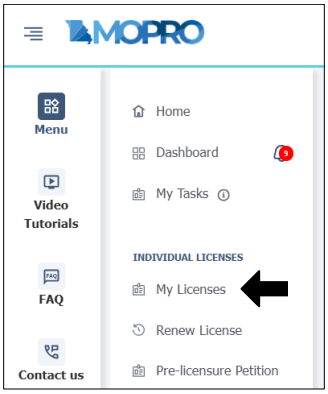
You can connect and add other business licenses to your account after your MOPRO account is created. To add licenses:

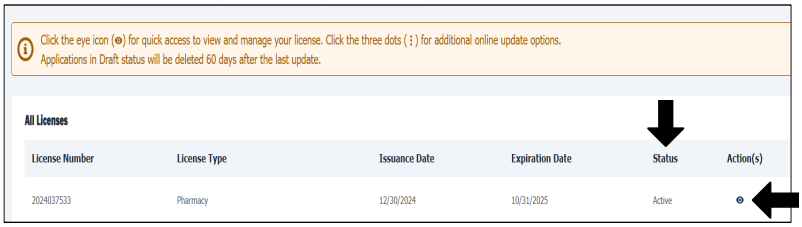
- Login to your MOPRO account and select "Claim Your Business License."
- MOPRO will prompt you to enter the license #, or business name/address, or FEIN for the license you want to add (only use a FEIN if previously filed with the Board). The information must match exactly what is printed on your license. *Note: The Missouri Secretary of State option is not currently available.*
- MOPRO will automatically retrieve your license after the business information is entered. After retrieving your license, a one-time password (OTP) will be sent to the business e-mail address registered with the Board for that license along with a link to officially add the license to your account.
- You will need access to the e-mail address registered with the Board to receive the OTP and add the license. To update an entity e-mail address, please e-mail an address change request to pharmacy@pr.mo.gov. Requests must be on official letterhead and include the entity's licensed name, license number, address, and the new e-mail address.
- Repeat the above steps for each license that you would like to add.



License Amendments:

You can view, edit, and amend your license in your MOPRO account by selecting "My License" on the left menu toolbar and then clicking the "eye" icon.



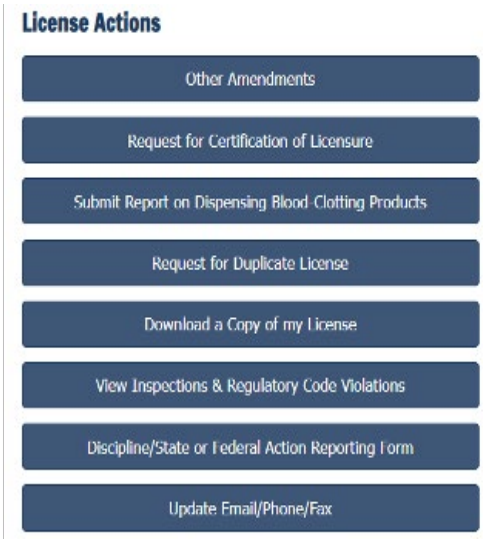


The "License Details" page will open after selecting the "eye" icon. Click "Other Amendments" on the License Details page to access the following options:

- **Pharmacy Class Change $$**
- **Designate Interim PIC**
- **Change of Person-In-Charge $$**
- **Change of Location $$**
- **Facility Name Change $$**
- **Out-of-Business Notification**
- **Change of Ownership Percentage/Corporate Officers:** Select to change the percentage of ownership for owners currently listed with the Board or to add/change/remove corporate officers. A "New" license application must be submitted to change ownership (see below).

$$- *Fees apply*

Other services/options available on the "License Details" page:



- **Update e-mail/ phone/fax #**
- **Download license copies:** A free copy of your license can now be downloaded directly from MOPRO. Downloaded licenses can be used as proof of official licensure under the Board's rules.
- **Request for Duplicate License $$:** Select if you would like the Board office to print a duplicate copy of the facility's license/permit and mail it to you. A $20 fee will apply for duplicate licenses printed and mailed by the Board office. Please note you can now print a free copy of the facility's license from the MOPRO portal by clicking the "Download License Copies" option (see above). Both Board and self-printed licenses from MOPRO can be used as proof of official licensure under the Board's rules.
- **Request for Certification of Licensure $$:** Select to request an official certification letter mailed or e-mailed directly by the Board. Please note a free online primary source verification can be printed from the Board's website by conducting an online licensee search at: https://mopro.mo.gov/license/s/license-search
- **Submit Class M Report on Dispensing Blood Clotting Products** *(*Pharmacies only)*
- **Discipline/State or Federal Action Reporting:** See rule 20 CSR 2220-2.010 for reporting requirements. Reports can also be submitted online at: https://mopro.mo.gov/license/s/pharmacy-reporting-form

$$- *Fees apply*

Change of Ownership Applications (All Entities): To apply for a change of ownership, the new owners will need to apply for a new licensee through their MOPRO account (see above for creating a MOPRO account). Once logged into your account, select "Apply for a New License" and enter the type of license you would like to apply for (pharmacy, drug distributor, drug outsourcer, drug manufacturer registrant). A new entity application will open with questions for submitting a Change of Ownership application.

- A Change of Ownership application is different from the change of ownership percentage amendment option. Use the new application process to officially apply for a license for the new owners or to change corporate structure (e.g., LLC to Inc., etc.) The *change of ownership percentage* option should only be used to adjust the *percentage of ownership* interest on a current license that is not being purchased/changed.

PHARMACY TECHNICIAN RENEWALS!

Pharmacy technician renewals opened on March 10th. Renewals can be completed online via the MOPRO online licensing system. To renew, technicians will need to register in MOPRO and create an account to access their registration (if not already completed). An online PIN # is no longer required to renew online. Instead, all renewals will be handled through MOPRO.

The pharmacy technician renewal fee is $40, in addition to the online processing fee. Technicians must renew by May 31st. Pharmacy technicians not renewed on or before the May 31st deadline are not authorized to work.

Technicians will need to have an email on file with the Board to create a MOPRO account and renew (see instructions above for creating and registering a MOPRO account and claiming your license).

- Need to update an e-mail address to claim your account? E-mail your name, date of birth, license number, and new e-mail address to moprotech@pr.mo.gov. You will need access to the e-mail account given to register in MOPRO.

REVISED PHARMACY TECHNICIAN DUTIES RULE

The Board recently promulgated new rule 20 CSR 2220-2.715 governing authorized pharmacy technician duties. The revised rule clarifies that pharmacists may delegate tasks to a registered pharmacy technician, as defined in the pharmacy's policies and procedures. [20 CSR 2220-2.715(1)].

20 CSR 2220-2.715(2) provides pharmacy technicians may not perform any activity that requires the "professional judgment" of a pharmacist. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- Any activity required by law or rule to be performed by a pharmacist or that requires a pharmacist's professional judgment;
- Prospective drug utilization review required by 20 CSR 2220-2.195,
- Advising on therapeutic duplications, drug-disease contraindications, drug interactions, drug allergy interactions, or prescription and non-prescription drug

recommendations,
• Recommending any prescription, non-prescription, or homeopathic medication, provided, a technician can inform patients of available vaccine services, vaccine eligibility, or past patient vaccine dates if authorized by a pharmacist,
• Final verification of a prescription before dispensing, except as authorized by 20 CSR 2220-2.012 for technology assisted final product verification,
• Receiving or providing transfer information for controlled substance prescriptions [20 CSR 2220-2.120(1)(D)],
• Modifying medication therapy [20 CSR 2220-6.080], and
• Patient counseling on medication or medical therapy (prescription or OTC), however, a pharmacy technician may read directions or information **exactly** as printed on a prescription label, medication container, or other pharmacist approved written communication, if authorized by the delegating pharmacist. Allowed activities must be detailed in the pharmacy's policies/procedures. [See 20 CSR 2220-2.715(2)(A)].

Note: Technicians must read exactly what was written by the pharmacist and cannot interpret what a pharmacist means or otherwise counsel the patient. This does not take the

IMPORTANT NOTE ON PATIENT COUNSELING

OBRA-90 and Board rule 20 CSR 2220-2.190 require that patients must be offered an opportunity to consult with a pharmacist each time a new or refill prescription is dispensed (see the Missouri Pharmacy Practice Guide for mandatory patient counseling for Class R Remote Dispensing Sites). Once requested, patient counseling may only be conducted by a pharmacist or an intern pharmacist operating under the pharmacist's direct supervision. Inspectors have observed multiple instances of technicians intentionally or inadvertently providing patient counseling. Examples include:

• Technicians independently answering questions about a medication's indication,
• Technicians recommending over-the-counter OTC products, and
• Technicians informing patients of side effects they may experience after being vaccinated or taking prescription/OTC medication.

These activities constitute patient counseling and cannot be performed by a technician under any circumstances. Talk with pharmacy staff to make sure they understand what technicians are allowed to do.

Patient counseling is one of the most important clinical services a pharmacist can provide and can help identify dispensing errors. Make sure technicians are compliant with the law and are not counseling patients, either directly or indirectly.

COMING SOON!

The 2025 Missouri Pharmacy Practice Guide will be published in April 2025. Please monitor the Board's website for additional developments.

UPCOMING BOARD MEETINGS

Join us for an upcoming Board meeting:

MARCH	APRIL	MAY
19 VIRTUAL	16-17 IN PERSON	21 VIRTUAL

JUNE	JULY
18 VIRTUAL	16-17 IN PERSON

Meeting information will be posted on the Board's website at: https://pr.mo.gov/pharmacists-meetings.asp

E-ALERTS

Sign up on the Board's website to receive e-alerts on Board news, compliance updates and licensing changes.

GOLD CERTIFICATES

Congratulations to our newest "gold certificate" pharmacists who have maintained a Missouri pharmacist license for 50 years:

Pamela Potts-Hustedde

Michael W Allen

Theresa D Donovan

Anna M Jenkins

Anita A Alka

David A Stibal

James D McLeod

RECENT DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

DRUG DISTRIBUTOR:

Ceva Animal Health LLC #2014037319– Kansas City, MO. Public Censure. Received legend veterinary drug products from unlicensed drug distributors. Section 338.055.2 (6) and (10) RSMo.

Coupler LLC., #2024036874– West Chester, PA. License issued on two (2) years probation. Operated on an expired license; distributed legend drugs or devices into Missouri without holding an active Missouri drug distributor registrant license. Section 324.038.1 RSMo.

Integrated Commercialization Solutions LLC, #2017037568– Brooks, KY. Public Censure. Operated without a Manager-in-Charge for approximately 43 months, and failed to timely notify the Board of a Manager-in-Charge change. Section 338.055.2 (3), (6), (13), and (15) RSMo.

DRUG DISTRIBUTOR REGISTRANT:

Pillar5 Pharma, Inc. #2024036227– Arniprior, Ontario, Canada. License issued on two (2) years probation. Operated without an active license; distributed legend drugs or devices into Missouri without holding an active Missouri drug distributor registrant license. Section 324.038.1 RSMo.

PHARMACISTS:

Bernstein, Sara, #2015026776–St. Louis, MO. Public Censure. As pharmacist, failed to provide documentation and maintain records demonstrating completion of required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (6), RSMo.

Bibee, Amanda, #2024049488, Lynchburg, TN. Pharmacist license issued on probation for fifty-four (54) months. Bibee placed on probation on May 1, 2016, for ingesting a controlled substance obtained from employer without a valid prescription. Bibee failed to renew in 2021; On reapplication, the Board imposed the unserved term of probation imposed in May 2016.

Bourbon, Cynthia, #042757, House Springs, MO. Public Censure. As a pharmacist, created and filled fraudulent prescriptions. Section 338.055.2 (6), (13) and (15), RSMo.

Dovin, Bruce J., #044126–Jackson, MO. Five (5) years probation. Pled guilty to committing the class E felony of Invasion of Privacy. Section 338.065 RSMo.

Duderija, Armin, #2019034282–St. Louis, MO. Public Censure. As pharmacist, failed to provide documentation and maintain records demonstrating completion with required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (3), (5) and (6), RSMo.

Earley, Jonathan, #2009021422, Clarence, MO. Revoked, and cannot reapply for seven (7) years. As Pharmacist-in-Charge, multiple inspection violations; expired drugs, dispensing errors, improper destruction of controlled substances/failure to record destruction, fraudulent patient payment practices, possession of a controlled substance without a valid prescription, lack of security for controlled substances. Section 338.055.2(4), (5), (6), (10), (12), (13), (15), (16), and (17), RSMo.

Kline, Stephanie, #2010028716–Kansas City, MO. Two (2) years probation. As pharmacist, failure to provide documentation and to maintain records demonstrating completion of required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (3), (5) and (6), RSMo.

Leavitt, Amy, Excelsior Springs, MO. Five (5) years probation. As pharmacist, dispensed controlled substance prescriptions to herself without a valid prescription and failed to properly maintain any such prescription at the Pharmacy. Section 338.055.2(5), (6), (13), and (15), RSMo

Robison, Lucas K., #2020038199–Chesterfield, MO. Public Censure. As pharmacist, failed to provide documentation and maintain records demonstrating completion with required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (3), (5) and (6), RSM

Thach, La, #2004035741–Lee's Summit, MO. Public Censure. As pharmacist, failed to provide documentation and maintain records demonstrating completion with required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (3), (5) and (6), RSMo.

Weatherby, Adam, #2006033353–Hazelwood, MO. Public Censure. As pharmacist, failed to provide documentation and maintain records demonstrating completion with required continuing education hours. Section 338.055.2 (3), (5), and (6), RSMo.

PHARMACIES:

CVS/caremark or CarelonRx Mail, #2005012321, Wilkes Barre, PA. Probation for three (3) years. Licensee disciplined in California for dispensing controlled substance prescriptions not issued for legitimate medical purposes (filling more than seven days early, dispensing from out of state prescribers, deviating from prescription instructions). Section 338.055.2 (5), (8), (13), and (15) RSMo.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF PHARMACY® NATIONAL PHARMACY COMPLIANCE NEWS – SECOND QUARTER 2025

(The following information was provided by the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy and is reprinted with permission of NABP. This information is provided for informational purposes only and does not express or represent the views or opinions of the Missouri Board of Pharmacy.)

DEA ISSUES THREE NEW RULES ABOUT PRESCRIBING MEDICATIONS VIA TELEMEDICINE

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has issued three rules addressing how to prescribe medication via telemedicine:

• Continuity of Care via Telemedicine for Veterans Affairs Patients: Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) practitioners, within the scope of their employment, are permitted to prescribe controlled substances (CS) via telemedicine to VA patients for whom they did not conduct an in-person medical evaluation. This rule's effective date was delayed until March 21, 2025.

• Expansion of Buprenorphine Treatment via Telemedicine Encounter: Following a practitioner's review of a patient's prescription drug monitoring program data for the state in which the patient is located during the telemedicine visit, a practitioner is allowed to prescribe an initial six-month supply of Schedule III-V medications ("split amongst several prescriptions totaling six calendar months") through audio-only communication. This rule's effective date was delayed until March 21, 2025.

• Special Registrations for Telemedicine and Limited State Telemedicine Registrations: This rule establishes three types of Special Registrations for prescribing CS: Telemedicine Prescribing Registration, Advanced Telemedicine Prescribing Registration, and Telemedicine Platform Registration. The new rules were developed in consultation with the United States Department of Health and Human Services and after significant input from the public. DEA received input during public listening sessions hosted in September 2023. Health care practitioners, experts, advocates, and patients shared their experiences and recommendations. DEA also carefully reviewed and considered more than 38,000 comments from the public in response to the original draft rule issued in 2023. ISMP: safety briefs. *this column was prepared by the institute for safe medications practices (ismp), an ECRI affiliate.*

ISMP SAFETY BRIEFS: USE OF ELECTRONIC PRESCRIPTION PRESCRIBERS NOTE FIELD CONTRIBUTES TO ERROR

This column was prepared by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP), an ECRI affiliate.

ISMP has received numerous error reports related to the field for "Comments" or "Prescribers Note" on electronic prescriptions, particularly when used to express a different set of directions than what is included in the "Sig" field or to clarify the medication order. In a recent event, a specialty pharmacy reported that a provider ordered Depakote® (divalproex sodium) 500 mg extended-release tablets for a patient. In the Sig field, the directions read, "Take 5 Tablet By Mouth As Directed - See Instructions" (Figure 1). The prescriber also included more detailed instructions in the Prescribers Note field at the bottom of the prescription, which stated, "Take 1 tab by mouth every morning and 1 tab every evening and 3 tabs at bedtime." Because the more specific instructions were included in the Prescribers Note field and not the Sig field, the pharmacy computer system did not automatically populate them and instead required manual entry. During the transcription process, the data entry technician missed part of the directions. The verification pharmacist did not catch the transcription error, and the prescription was dispensed with incorrect directions. The error was discovered at the first refill when the pharmacist double-checked the prescription directions against the original prescription. Thankfully, the patient was taking the medication correctly, as they had been on this regimen for quite some time.

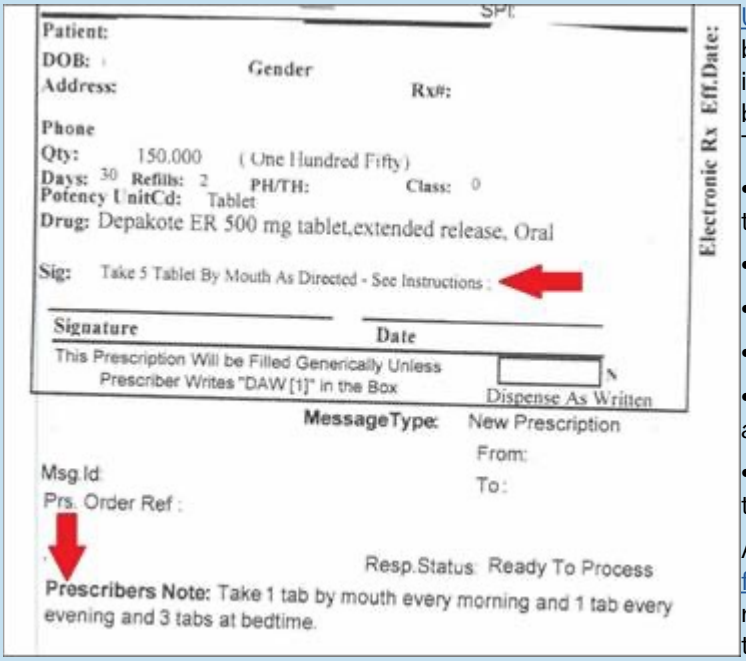

Patient:
DOB:
Gender
Address:
Rx#:
Phone
Qty: 150.000 (One Hundred Fifty)
Days: 30 Refills: 2 PH/TH: Class: 0
Potency UnitCd: Tablet
Drug: Depakote ER 500 mg tablet,extended release, Oral
Sig: Take 5 Tablet By Mouth As Directed - See Instructions
Signature Date
This Prescription Will be Filled Generically Unless Prescriber Writes "DAW [1]" in the Box
Dispense As Written
MessageType: New Prescription
From:
To:
Msg.Id:
Prs. Order Ref:
Resp.Status: Ready To Process
Prescribers Note: Take 1 tab by mouth every morning and 1 tab every evening and 3 tabs at bedtime.
Electronic Rx Eff.Date:

Figure 1. A prescriber included instructions in the e-prescription's Sig field (horizontal red arrow) and a more specific set of instructions in the Prescribers Note field (downward pointing red arrow).

We have received similar reports from community pharmacists. For example, a community pharmacy received an electronic prescription for the anticonvulsant gabapentin with "1 tablet PO TID" in the Sig field but "i po bid x7 days, then i po tid thereafter" in the notes field.

Using the comment or notes field to correct or modify electronic orders is problematic, as pharmacy staff may miss the information. Or, as in the case above, mistakes may be made when manually transcribing the information during data entry. ISMP recommends that organizations establish an escalation strategy for when staff and prescribers cannot enter the correct information (eg, dose, frequency) into the electronic prescribing system. If two sets of directions are seen on an electronic prescription (ie, in the sig and in the notes), pharmacy staff should seek clarification from the prescriber prior to dispensing. Pharmacists should inform and educate prescribers when potential or actual errors are encountered as a result of using the comments or notes field.

SAMHSA RELEASES NATIONAL GUIDANCE FOR SUD TREATMENT FACILITIES AND NEW OPIOID TREATMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released two key documents aimed at improving care for people with substance use disorder (SUD). The National Guidance on Essential Specialty Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Care outlines crucial services that should be available at SUD treatment facilities. This guidance is intended to help recognize treatment gaps, support evidence-based planning, and improve treatment for adults with SUD. The services listed include the following:

- Pharmacotherapy for managing withdrawal and long-term treatment;
- Testing and monitoring for substance use;
- Education and counseling for patients and families;
- Comprehensive assessment and pretreatment services;
- Ancillary and transitional support services, including housing and employment assistance; and
- Recovery support programs to help patients maintain long-term sobriety.

Additionally, SAMHSA has published the Federal Guidelines for Opioid Treatment Programs (2024), which provides recommendations for overseeing and managing opioid treatment programs (OTPs). These guidelines address the following:

- General and clinical provisions;
- Best practices for medication administration, dispensing, and use;
- Standards for services delivered by OTPs;
- Strategies for ensuring continuity of care; and
- Processes for requesting regulatory exemptions when necessary.

While SAMHSA emphasizes that this document is not legally binding, it is designed to guide providers in improving the effectiveness and accessibility of opioid use disorder treatment.

CDC UNVEILS COLLABORATIVE PLAN TO ADDRESS HEALTH RISKS ACROSS PEOPLE, ANIMALS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

On January 10, 2025, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published its first collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary plan to tackle zoonotic diseases. The National One Health Framework to Address Zoonotic Diseases and Advance Public Health Preparedness in the United States guidebook explains the One Health framework, which is intended to protect people, animals, and the environment from health threats that affect both people and animals, such as COVID-19, avian influenza, etc. CDC has outlined seven goals to enhance collaboration and cooperation with agencies and partners as part of its One Health framework over the next five years (2025-2029).

HHS ISSUES FINAL RULE UPDATING RETAIL PHARMACY STANDARDS FOR ELECTRONIC TRANSACTIONS UNDER HIPAA

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will publish the final rule regarding updated retail pharmacy standards for electronic transactions adopted under the Administrative Simplification subtitle of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). Specifically, the retail pharmacy transaction standards for health care claims or equivalent encounter information, eligibility for a health plan, referral certification and authorization, and coordination of benefits will be modified to help improve data exchange and workflow automation. This rule is delayed to April 14, 2025; required compliance dates will be extended to April 14, 2028.

NABP FEATURED IN ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY IN PHARMACY REGULATION TO KEEP PATIENTS SAFE DOCUMENTARY

Technology has given consumers an easy way to buy medications; however, not every online pharmacy sells authentic medications. The recently released Advancing Technologies in Pharmacy Regulation to Keep Patients Safe documentary delves into NABP's role in educating consumers on the safe purchase, consumption, and disposal of medications. Building on its efforts to educate consumers about medication safety, NABP also supports advancing the use of technology in the pharmacy field to protect public health, while still assessing the regulatory scope needed to ensure that it is implemented safely and effectively.

POLICY PERSPECTIVES: 'NAVIGATING FEDERAL HEALTH POLICY IN THE 119TH CONGRESS'

As is common following presidential elections, in 2025, Washington, DC [has been undergoing] significant changes – a new White House, a reshuffled cabinet, shifts in party control of the Senate, and the arrival of several new members in the political sphere. Such change can bring fresh ideas and perspectives to a city often criticized for its lack of progress. Republicans [now] have control of both chambers of Congress and the White House following the reelection of Donald J. Trump as the 47th president of the United States. This [is enabling] them to leverage legislative procedures to fast-track bills without needing a supermajority of 60 votes, ensuring that they can promote the president's agenda, both at the agency level and through Congress. The expected top-down approach will shape the political landscape moving forward.

Read more in the January/February 2025 issue of Innovations®.

ALASKA, IDAHO, AND NORTH DAKOTA BOARDS OF PHARMACY RECOGNIZED AS WELLBEING FIRST CHAMPIONS

The Alaska Board of Pharmacy, Idaho Board of Pharmacy, and North Dakota Board of Pharmacy were each awarded Wellbeing First Champion badges by the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation. As Wellbeing First Champions, these Boards verified that their licensing applications do not include any intrusive mental health questions and stigmatizing language.

NABP Executive Director/Secretary Lemrey "Al" Carter, PharmD, MS, RPh, praised the Boards' accomplishments and said, "To serve patients and protect public health, it is imperative that health care workers feel empowered to seek help without fearing repercussions from their licensing boards. We commend the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation for [its] efforts to drive change through [its] Wellbeing First Champion Challenge and are excited to see more boards of pharmacy receive their badges over the coming months."

NABP supports the Wellbeing First Champion Challenge and other efforts to improve pharmacists' mental health and well-being and will continue to work with its member boards of pharmacy on this and other efforts that can help create a more resilient and healthier pharmacy workforce.